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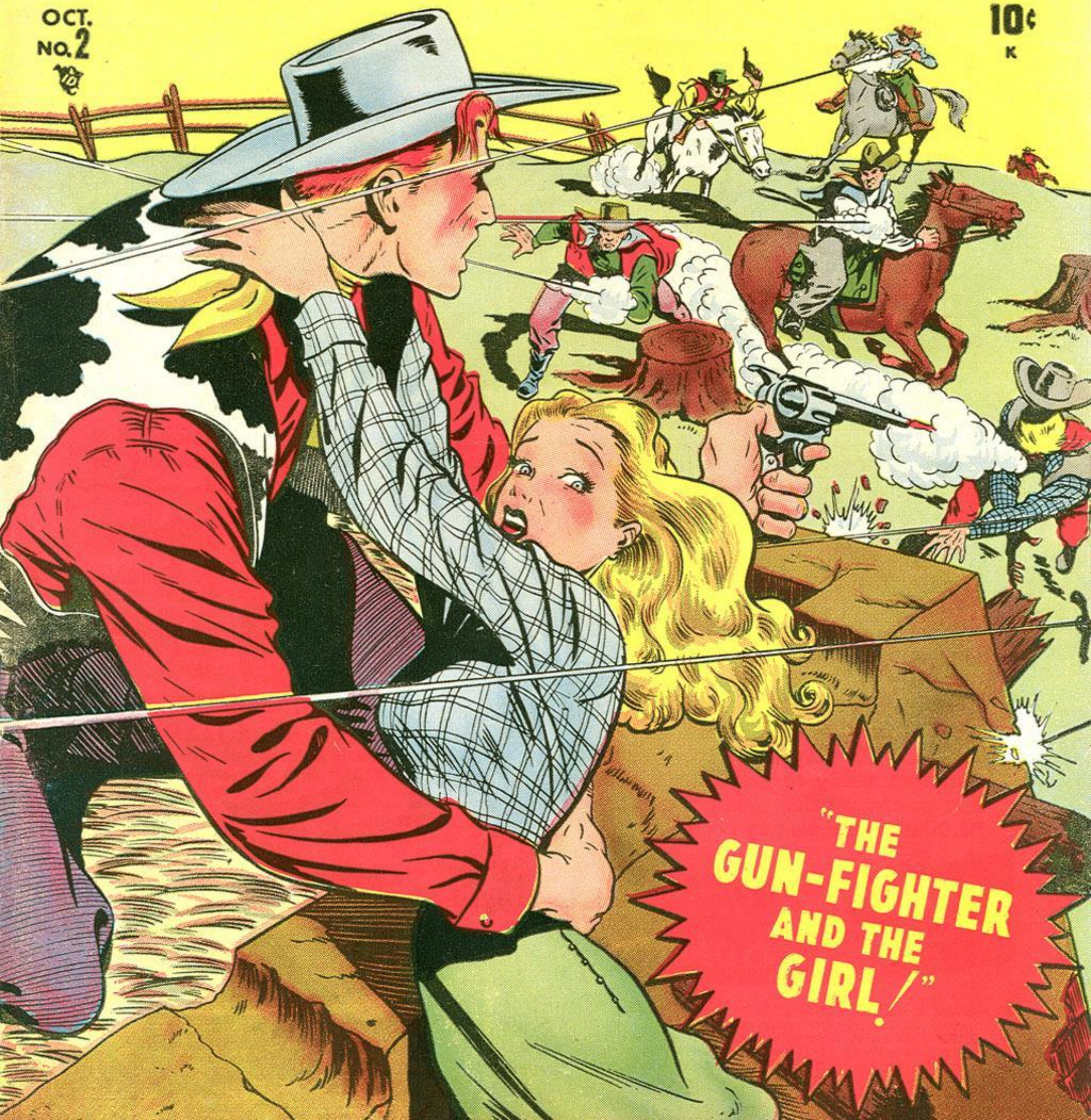

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KID COLT OUTLAW

INTO THE BADLANDS, INTO THE DEN OF THE MOST VICIOUS OF OWLHOOTERS, WHERE COLT-CRAZY CUTTHROATS KILL AT THE DROP OF A HAT, RIDES ***KID COLT!*** HERE IN THIS DEN OF GUN-WOLVES THE KID BATTLES TO SAVE THE LIFE AND HONOR OF A YOUNG GUNFIGHTER, AND BRING HIM BACK FROM THE WILD BUNCH TO THE GIRL HE LOVES! READ HERE THE SOUL-SEARING SAGA OF—

"The GUNFIGHTER and the GIRL!"

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AT THE FOOTHILLS OF THE MOGOLLON RANGE, A YOUNG COWBOY RACES RECKLESSLY UPWARD TOWARD THE JUMBLED, TWISTING LABYRINTHS OF THE BADLANDS!

GIT ALONG, CALICO! I'LL SHOW *HER!* YOU WAIT AN' SEE!

AS THE FLYING CAYUSE ROUNDS A BEND IN THE TRAIL HE ALMOST SMASHES INTO A POWERFUL STEEL-DUST STALLION! ONLY A CATLIKE SIDE-STEP OF THE NOBLE BLUE-ROAN PREVENTS INJURY TO HIS MASTER, KID COLT!

LOOK OUT!

MOVIN' A MIGHT *FAST* FOR *THIS KIND* OF *TRAIL*, AREN'T YOU, COWBOY?

GET OUTTA MY WAY OR I'LL *BORE* YOU!

KID COLT'S HANDS BLUR IN LIGHTNING MOVEMENT AND THE BELLIGERENT COWBOY FINDS HIMSELF GAZING INTO THE MUZZLES OF TWIN SIX-GUNS!

HOLD IT, FELLA!

G-GOSH! HOW DID YOU DO IT? I-I MEAN, I'VE *NEVER SEEN* SUCH A *DRAW* IN ALL MY *LIFE!*

IT'S GETTIN' DARK, PARDNER, AN' THIS IS A PRETTY RUGGED TRAIL WHEN THE LIGHT GOES! SUPPOSE WE MAKE CAMP AND TALK THIS OVER!

WELL, OKAY! SAY, MISTER, I'M SORRY I ACTED SO DANGED ORNERY! IT'S BECAUSE—WELL, I'VE GOT SOMETHING ON MY MIND!

CAMP IS MADE OFF THE TRAIL! AND AFTER GRUB THE TWO HORSEMEN RELAX IN FRONT OF THE GREASE-WOOD FIRE!

YOU SEEMED TO BE IN A MIGHTY BIG *HURRY* TO REACH THE *MOGOLLON RANGE*, PARDNER! Y'KNOW THAT'S *OUTLAW* COUNTRY UP THERE!

I KNOW! THAT'S WHERE I'M HEADIN'! I'M GONNA JOIN UP WITH THE *WILD BUNCH!*

THE YOUNG COWBOY, HIS TROUBLE RIDING HIM, POURS OUT HIS TALE TO KID COLT!

MY NAME IS DICK DARNELL, AN' I WAS WORKIN' FOR THE CHESSNELL OUTFIT! OL' MAN CHESSNELL HAS A DAUGHTER, AN'-- WELL, I-I *FELL* FOR HER--*HARD!*

I COULDN'T KEEP AWAY FROM HER! SHE SAID SHE LOVED ME TOO, AN' I *NEGLECTED* MY *WORK* TO BE WITH HER!

" THIS MORNING, OL' CHESSNELL PAID ME OFF! I DON'T *BLAME* HIM! I WASN'T WORTH A HOOT, MOONIN' OVER LOUISE! COULDN'T WORK, COULDN'T DO NOTHIN' BUT DREAM!"

DICK, I JUST HEARD! DAD *FIRED* YOU!

YES, LOUISE, HE *SHORE DID!*

LOUISE, *MARRY ME!* I'LL GET ANOTHER JOB! WE'LL BE HAPPY!

MARRY A FORTY-DOLLAR-A-MONTH COWPOKE? WHY, DICK, YOU CAN'T EVEN HOLD A JOB! DAD SAYS YOU'RE JUST A NO-GOOD LAZY DRIFTER!

"LOUISE'S TAUNTS MADE ME SEE RED! I GUESS FOR A WHILE THERE, I WAS AS CRAZY AS A LOCOED STEER!"

I WAS THE BEST COWMAN IN THESE PARTS, TILL I MET *YOU!* I CAN'T WORK, EAT OR SLEEP FROM THINKIN' OF YOU! LOUISE, IF YOU DON'T MARRY ME I'LL-I'LL *JOIN THE WILD BUNCH!*

DON'T THREATEN ME, DICK! YOU HAVEN'T SAND ENOUGH TO BE GOOD, *EVEN AT BEING BAD!*

THAT SETTLES IT!, I'M GONNA JOIN MOSEBY'S 'RAIDERS! BUT *FIRST*, I'LL GIVE YOU *SOMETHING* TO *REMEMBER ME BY!*

DICK! NO!

"I CRUSHED HER TO ME, KISSED HER AN' RODE AWAY LIKE A WILD MAN, HER VOICE RINGING IN MY EARS!"

DICK! — WAIT! — DICK!

GO *BACK* TO HER, DICK! SHE WAS JUST TRYING TO STRIKE FIRE FROM YOU! *YOU'RE NOT CUT OUT* FOR THE *OWLHOOT TRAIL!*

I *CAN'T* GO BACK! SHE'D THINK I WAS *CRAWLIN'* DIDN'T HAVE *GUTS* ENOUGH TO GO ON! NOPE! *I'M JOININ' MOSEBY'S GUN-WOLVES!*

KID COLT SEES THE WHITE BLAZE OF DETERMINATION IN YOUNG DICK'S EYES AND REALIZES THAT HE CAN DO NOTHING TO STOP HIM FROM GOING TO THE BAD LANDS!

OKAY, FELLER, IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU FEEL! WE'D BETTER BED DOWN NOW, IT'S GETTIN' LATE!

'AS THE FIRE BURNS DOWN TO GLOWING COALS, KID COLT LIES AWAKE, TRYING TO THINK OF SOME WAY TO KEEP DICK FROM THE OWLHOOT TRAIL...

GUESS THAT'S THE ONLY WAY! I'LL RIDE WITH HIM AN' *TRY* TO MAKE HIM *DISGUSTED* WITH THE OUTLAW LIFE!

AS DAWN STREAKS THE SKY AND THE LAST COYOTE VOICES ITS MOURNFUL CALL, THE TWO MEN PREPARE TO MOVE ON!

IT SHORE WAS NICE MEETIN' YOU, STRANGER! I RECKON *THIS IS GOODBYE!*

NOT YET, PARDNER! I'M RIDIN' WITH YOU!

RECKON YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'M JOININ' MOSEBY'S BAND, THE *OUTLAWS!* THEY'LL *KILL* YOU IF YOU RIDE IN WITH ME!

I DON'T THINK SO, DICK! I RECKON, MAYBE I'D BE *WELCOME!* Y'SEE, *I'M KID COLT!*

KID COLT, THE *FAMOUS OUTLAW!* THIS MUST BE MY LUCKY DAY!

RIDING UPWARD, EVER UPWARD, TOWARD THE HEIGHTS OF THE FORBIDDING MOGOLLONS, KID COLT AND HIS COMPANION FINALLY MAKE CONTACT WITH THE WILD BUNCH!

DON'T MOVE, GENTS! SPEAK YORE PIECE, FAST!

I'M *KID COLT*, AN' THIS IS MY *SIDE-KICK!* WE'RE AIMIN' TO JOIN UP WITH MOSEBY!

THE NAME KID COLT IS LIKE A KEY UNLOCKING THE DOOR TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE WILD BUNCH! FIVE MINUTES LATER THE KID FINDS HIMSELF IN THE OUTLAW CAMP FACING THE NOTORIOUS KILLER OWLHOOTER, MOSEBY!

GLAD TO SEE YA, KID! I'VE *HEARD* ENOUGH ABOUT YA! *WELCOME TO MOSEBY'S RAIDERS!*

HOWDY, MOSEBY! THIS'S DICK DARNELL! *I'LL VOUCH* FOR HIM!

SUDDENLY A COLD VOICE CALLS KID COLT'S NAME! THE OLD SIGNALS OF TROUBLE PUSH AGAINST THE KID AS HE WHIRLS, HANDS BRUSHING HIS HOLSTERS!

YEAH, IT'S *ME*, COLT—*JAKE SMATHERS!* YA THOUGHT YA GOT ME IN MARIPOSA CITY, BUT I LIVED--*LIVED TO GET YOU!* IF I TOLD MOSEBY—

SHUT YOUR MOUTH AN' FILL YOUR HAND!

HANDS BLUR IN THE OUTLAWS' LIGHTNING DRAW! FLAMING LEAD LANCES BETWEEN THE TWO MEN!

BAM!

BAM!

BAM!

THE KILLING OF JAKE SMATHERS FORCED ON HIM, KID COLT USES THE INCIDENT AS THE FIRST STEP IN HIS CAMPAIGN TO DRIVE DICK DARNELL AWAY FROM A LIFE OF BLOOD AND CRIME!

LET'S GET SOME CHOW, DICK! I'M HUNGRY AS A BEAR!

HUNGRY? G-GOSH, HOW CAN YOU EAT AFTER JUST *K-KILLING* A MAN?

LISTEN, AND *REMEMBER THIS!* YOU'RE AN *OUTLAW* NOW, AND IT'S *KILL OR BE KILLED*-- EVEN YOUR *OWN BROTHER* IF IT BRINGS YOU PROFIT! THIS IS A HARD LIFE WITH NOTHIN' TO LOOK FORWARD TO BUT A *BULLET* OR A *ROPE* IN THE END! *SAVVY?*

AS THE AFTERNOON WANES A COUNCIL OF WAR IS HELD BY MOSEBY'S RAIDERS!

MEN, WE'VE BEEN *LAZY TOO LONG!* TONIGHT WE RAID! IT'LL GIVE US A CHANCE TA SEE HOW OUR *NEW MEMBERS* STACK UP! HA! HA!

WE'RE GONNA HIT A RANCH ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF WAYNETOWN, SO IT'S HIT AN' AWAY BEFORE THE SHERIFF IN WAYNETOWN CAN PUT A POSSE ON OUR TAILS! THE RANCH WE HIT IS THE *CHESSNELL* SPREAD! FOR *MY* PART OF THE BOOTY, *I'LL TAKE OL' CHESSNELL'S GAL!* HA! HA! HA!

HE-HE'S TALKIN' ABOUT *LOUISE!* I'LL *KILL* HIM! I'LL...

HOLD IT, YOU FOOL! THEY'D BURN YOU DOWN! YOU DON'T STAND A CHANCE!

YOUNG DICK IS KILLING MAD AND IT TAKES ALL OF KID COLT'S MUSCULAR PERSUASION TO KEEP HIM FROM BEING SEEN BY THE CASE-HARDENED OUTLAW GANG!

STOP STRUGGLIN' OR I'LL *BEND* A *COLT* OVER YOUR FOOL HEAD!

THE KID GRASPS HIS OPPORTUNITY TO RUB INTO PICK'S RAW NERVES THE BURNING SALT OF THE OUTLAWS CODE!

I *TOLD YOU* THIS AIN'T KID STUFF! YOU'RE AN *OUTLAW* NOW! YOU BROKE AWAY FROM THE HONEST CITIZENS DOWN BELOW! *WHAT DO YOU* CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM? FROM NOW ON IT'S *KILL* AN' *ROB* AN' *LIVE LIKE A WOLF!*

I'M *NOT* AN OUTLAW *YET*, AN' FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN I DON'T *WANTA* BE ONE! *I'M GOIN' BACK DOWN AN' WARN CHESSNELL!*

USE YOUR HEAD, FELLA! *NO ONE* LEAVES HERE TILL IT'S *TIME* TO *STRIKE!*

I-I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU'D HELP ME! I HEARD PEOPLE TALK ABOUT YOU! I THOUGHT YOU--YOU WERE *DECENT!*

DECENT? THAT'S A LAUGH! I'M AN *OUTLAW* LIKE THE *REST* OF THEM! BUT--WELL, MEBBE I'LL HELP YOU! NOT BECAUSE THERE'S ANY GOOD IN ME, UNDERSTAND? BUT JUST BECAUSE *YOU'D* ONLY GET *ME* INTO *TROUBLE* TRAILIN' ALONG!

NIGHT SCREENS THE ARCH OF SKY LIKE A VELVET CLOAK AND THE WILD BUNCH PREPARE TO RIDE!

LET'S RIDE, MEN!

NOW STICK CLOSE TO ME! I'LL GET YOU OUT OF THIS SOMEHOW!

I DON'T *TRUST* YOU ANYMORE, COLT! I'LL TURN LOOSE IF THINGS GO WRONG, SO HELP ME!

MOSEBY'S RAIDERS RIDE DOWN FROM THEIR ROCKY HIDEOUT AND AS THEY QUIETLY APPROACH THE CHESSNELL RANCH, DICK, DISTRUST RIDING HIM, SMASHES THE NIGHT WITH A WARNING SHOT!

BANG!

WHO FIRED THAT SHOT?

THAT SHOT'LL BRING A *POSSE* FROM WAYNETOWN! KEEP THE RANCH BETWEEN US AN' THE BUNKHOUSE! WE'LL GET THE GIRL AN' HOLD HER FOR RANSOM, THEN RUN OFF THE CATTLE! *C'MON! WE HAVEN'T GOT MUCH TIME!*

MOSEBY'S GOIN' IN!

TAKE IT EASY, DICK! OUR TIME WILL COME!

INSIDE THE RANCH HOUSE, MOSEBY TAKES OVER!

YOU, GIRL! COME HERE! CHESSNELL, YO'RE A RICH MAN! YA WON'T MIND PAYIN' TA GIT HER BACK!

IF *MY MEN WEREN'T ALL IN TOWN*, YOU WOULDN'T GET AWAY WITH THIS, YOU *COYOTE!*

A RED HAZE BLINDS DICK TO CAUTION WHEN HE SEES LOUISE STRUGGLING IN MOSEBY'S BRUTAL PAWS!

TAKE YOUR DIRTY HANDS OFF THAT GIRL, YA POLECAT!

YA CRAZY FOOL! GUN HIM DOWN, MEN! WE GOT NO USE FER A TROUBLE-MAKER!

KID COLT'S LEAD SMASHES THE GLASS LAMP TO FRAGMENTS!

OUT, DICK! TO THE BUNKHOUSE!

BANG!

GET IN THE BUNKHOUSE WITH DICK! WE CAN STAND THEM OFF FROM THERE!

THE MEN FROM WAYNETOWN WILL BE HERE SOON! THEY MUST HAVE HEARD THE SHOOTING!

BUT DICK IS NOT IN THE BUNKHOUSE! HE IS OUTSIDE STALKING MOSEBY, RED RAGE RIPPING HIS CAUTION TO SHREDS!

MOSEBY! I KNOW YOU'RE THERE! STEP OUT AN' MEET ME LIKE A MAN, YA YELLOW COYOTE!

AT THE OTHER CORNER OF THE RANCH-HOUSE, MOSEBY HOLDS A HOSTAGE UNKNOWN TO DICK!

DON'T MAKE A SOUND, CHESSNELL, OR I'LL BLAST OUT YORE BACKBONE!

I'M COMIN' OUT, A-SHOOTIN'!

THE WILY OUTLAW PLAYS HIS HOLE CARD!

HERE I COME! BLAZE AWAY!

AS THE DARK FIGURE STAGGERS OUT, DICK JUMPS FORWARD AND, THINKING IT'S MOSEBY, SHOOTS TO KILL!

TAKE IT, YOU LOW-DOWN DOG!

BAM! BAM!

YOUNG DICK, IN THE OPEN, MAKES A GOOD TARGET FOR MOSEBY'S LEAD IN THE TRICKY NIGHT-LIGHT!

HA! GOT HIM!

BAM!

SUDDENLY THE NIGHT IS SPLIT WITH SOUND AND FURY! WAYNETOWN RIDERS COME SWEEPING IN WITH BLAZING GUNS!

BANG!

BAM!

BANG!

C'MON, MEN! ONCE IN THE FOOTHILLS WE'RE SAFE!

AS MOSEBY, AND THOSE OF HIS MEN THAT CAN RIDE, MAKE THEIR GETAWAY, KID COLT PREPARES TO LEAVE!

DAD! DICK!

RECKON I BETTER SASHAY OUT! I DON'T THINK DICK'LL WANT ANY PART OF THE OWLHOOT TRAIL FROM NOW ON!

BUT BEFORE THE KID CAN LEAVE, EVENTS TAKE A NASTY TURN!

HE'S *DEAD!* *DAD'S DEAD!*

HE DID IT! *DICK DARNELL!* I *SAW* HIM SHOOT OL' CHESSNELL *AS WE RODE IN!*

YOU *SAID* YOU'D JOIN MOSEBY! YOU *SAID* YOU'D TURN BAD! YOU SHOT DAD BECAUSE HE FIRED YOU--YOU *KILLER*, YOU!

NO, LOUISE, *NO!* I SHOT *MOSEBY!*

I'VE GOT TO GET *MOSEBY* AND CALL HIM OUT! IF *HE* LIVES, YOUNG *DICK* WILL *HANG!*

HIS MIND SEETHING WITH PLANS TO EXTRICATE DICK FROM HIS DIFFICULTIES, KID COLT RACES FURIOUSLY UPWARD AND SOON REACHES MOSEBY'S LAIR!

YOU AN' YORE *DOUBLE-CROSSIN' PARDNER*, COLT! I SHOULDA KNOWN YA WASN'T ON THE LEVEL WHEN YA GUNNED SMATHERS BEFORE HE COULD TALK!

MOSEBY! SLAP LEATHER!

FACING OVERWHELMING ODDS, KID COLT DRAWS AND SENDS HIS FIRST SLUG TO MOSEBY'S BLACK HEART!

BANG!

BANG!

BANG!

AS MOSEBY FALLS, THE KID WHEELS THE STEEL-DUST STALLION DOWN THE TRAIL AND RACES AWAY FROM THE HAIL OF HOT LEAD SEEKING HIS BLOOD!

I-I GUESS THEY TAGGED ME A FEW!

BANG!

BANG!

FASTER, STEEL! WE'VE GOT *ONE MORE* JOB TO DO, TO SAVE DICK!

AT THE RANCH, AN ANGRY MOB TAKES THE LAW INTO ITS OWN HANDS!

YOU LIE, YA DIRTY KILLER! YORE GONNA DANCE ON AIR!

I TELL YA, I DIDN'T DO IT!

NO, *WAIT!* GIVE HIM A *CHANCE!*

AS THE ROPE TIGHTENS AROUND THE COWPUNCHER'S THROAT...

BANG!

GIP!

YOU'RE A LITTLE PREVIOUS, GENTS! DICK *DID* KILL MOSEBY! MOSEBY'S MEN TOOK HIS BODY WITH THEM! YOU'LL FIND HIM DEAD IN HIS HIDEOUT! AS TO OLD MAN CHESSNELL— I KILLED HIM WHEN HE MADE A BREAK TO GET AWAY!

AS THE ANGRY TOWNSMEN TURN LOOSE THEIR LEAD, KID COLT SPURS HIS MIGHTY ROAN MADLY AWAY FROM THE BLOODY BOOT HILL MESSENGERS!

BAM!

BAM!

BAM!

C'CRACK!

THE GREAT STEELDUST STALLION CARRIES HIS WOUNDED MASTER DEEP INTO THE FOREST BELT, AND SAFETY, LEAVING THE PURSUING BROOMTAILS LOST IN THE DUST OF HIS BACK TRAIL!

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE RANCH...

OH, DICK! I JUST SAID WHAT I DID TO *WAKE YOU UP!* I *DIDN'T THINK...*

SHHH-H, DEAR! IT'S ALL OVER! AN' DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! I'M CURED OF THE OWLHOOT TRAIL! I *HATE ALL OUTLAWS!*

AND SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, IN WAYNETOWN!

AND I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!

OH, DICK!

WHILE IN A CAVE, DEEP IN THE WOODED FOOTHILLS, ALONE AND WEAK WITH WOUNDS, KID COLT RESTS IN HIS HIDDEN LAIR LIKE A GUN-SHOT WOLF, WAITING FOR STRENGTH TO RETURN SO HE CAN RIDE ON ONCE MORE--A MAN OF THE OWLHOOT TRAILS, A HUNTED OUTLAW!

THE END

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KID COLT OUTLAW

FATE DEALS THE KID A HAND OF SHOWDOWN WHERE THE FASTEST DRAW AND THE QUICKEST GUN-EYE RAKES IN THE POT, A POT OF RED CHIPS--RED WITH BLOOD! KID COLT PLAYS HIS HAND AS IT'S DEALT, IN—

"CARDS OR GUNS--DRAW, KID COLT, OR DIE!"

3812

TELEPATCHIE PENITENTIARY, WHERE MEN OF THE GREAT SOUTHWEST WHO HAVE LIVED THROUGH ROPE AND LEAD LAW, PAY THEIR CRIMINAL DEBTS TO SOCIETY!

TEN YEARS AGO, THE IRON DOORS CLOSED UPON CLYDE JENNISON, FAMOUS GUNMAN! TODAY THEY OPEN AND CLYDE WALKS OUT INTO THE SUN--A FREE MAN ONCE MORE!

CLYDE, YOU NEVER DID BELONG IN HERE! YOU'VE PAID YOUR DEBT--NOW SEE THAT YOU DON'T COME BACK!

THERE ARE *OTHER* DEBTS TO BE PAID, WARDEN! *ADIOS!*

AT THE RAILROAD STATION, THE GUNMAN RESTLESSLY PACES THE PLATFORM, HIS MIND A MASS OF SEETHING HATE, NURSED AND AGGRAVATED BY TEN LONG YEARS OF CONFINEMENT!

THE TRAIN PULLS IN, AND CLYDE JENNISON MOUNTS THE STEPS TO RIDE HOME, TO RIDE BACK TEN YEARS--TO *VENGEANCE!*

AS THE TRAIN PULLS OUT OF THE DISMAL STATION, ANOTHER LINKING EVENT IS TAKING PLACE MANY MILES AWAY AT A PROSPEROUS LITTLE RANCH IN WHITNEYVILLE COUNTY...

WHITNEYVILLE STATION IN ONE HOUR BARRIN' ACCIDENTS!

THANKS FOR EVERYTHING, FRANK! MY ARM'S AS GOOD AS NEW. NOW!

KID COLT IS *ALWAYS* WELCOME AT THE JENNISON RANCH! *WE DON'T BELIEVE* WHAT THE *REWARD NOTICES* SAY!

UNCLE FRANK SAYS THE *SHERIFF RODE AWAY* TO VALPARAISO!

GOOD! I CAN RISK GOIN' INTO TOWN FOR SUPPLIES! THEN OFF INTO THE HILLS AGAIN! *ADIOS!*

REMEMBER, YOU'RE *ALWAYS* WELCOME HERE! EVER SINCE YOU SAVED YOUNG STAN FROM THAT LOCOED BULL I'VE OWED YOU *NOTHIN' BUT THE BEST!*

TOWARD THE TOWN OF WHITNEYVILLE, KID COLT LOPES HIS POWERFUL STEELDUST STALLION, LITTLE AWARE THAT HE IS BUT ONE OF THE CARDS IN THE HAND OF FATE!

AN HOUR LATER, KID COLT JOGS INTO THE OUTSKIRTS OF WHITNEYVILLE...

WHITNEYVILLE! DON'T FORGET YOUR *BAGGAGE*, FOLKS!

FATE DRAWS A SECOND CARD! NOW SHE HAS A PAIR—KID COLT, OUTLAW, AND CLYDE JENNISON, GUNMAN!

GIVE HIM A RUBDOWN AND A BAG OF OATS!

HARDWARE GUNSMITH

SALOON

STABLE

MEANWHILE, JENNISON ENTERS THE GUNSMITH'S TO ARM HIMSELF!

FATE PLAYS HER PAIR CANNILY, HER HOLE CARD HIDDEN!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER THE TRAILS OF KID COLT AND CLYDE JENNISON CONVERGE ON THE BOARD WALK!

WATCH IT, STRANGER!

WHAT THE..!

ARMED NOW, THE GUN-PROUD EX-CONVICT'S BROODING TEMPER FLAMES OUT!

YOU *CLUMSY CLODHOPPER!* I'VE *KILLED* MEN FOR LESS!

KID COLT, A WANTED OUTLAW, CAN'T AFFORD A RUCKUS IN TOWN! CALM LOGIC OUTWEIGHS ANGER...

WAIT! NO USE WASTIN' LEAD, PARTNER!

AS QUICKLY AS IT FLARED UP, JENNISON'S ANGER COOLS!

C'MON, LET'S HAVE A DRINK INSTEAD!

WELL, GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT, FRIEND! I'LL *JOIN* YOU!

EATS

AT THE BAR, CLYDE JENNISON MAKES HIS FIRST ANTE IN FATE'S GAME OF DRAW!

SAY, APRON, I'M LOOKIN' FOR A HOMBRE NAME OF *FRANK JENNISON* AN' A BUTTON CALLED STAN—THEY LIVED IN THESE PARTS TEN YEARS AGO!

TEN YEARS! TOOK YOU QUITE A SPELL TO GET AROUND TO *LOOKIN'* FOR THEM, DIDN'T IT?

WHERE I WAS, FRIEND, THEY DIDN'T TAKE KINDLY TO VISITS HOME! MY HANDLE'S *CLYDE JENNISON*, FRANK'S BROTHER! YOUNG *STAN* IS *MY SON!*

THE BITTERNESS OF TEN YEARS, NURSED AND BREWED IN SILENCE, POURS FORTH FROM THE CONVICT'S LIPS LIKE WITCH'S BROTH FROM A BOILING CAULDRON!

TEN YEARS AGO, IT WAS! THAT DOUBLE-CROSSIN' COYOTE, FRANK AN' ME WERE PLAYIN' PINOCHLE! MY WIFE HAD DIED AN' FRANK, ME, AN' MY BOY, STAN, BUNKED TOGETHER IN TOWN HERE!

"SUDDENLY WE HEARD A CHILD'S SCREAM AND THE YELP OF A PUP IN PAIN!"

THAT SOUNDED LIKE STAN'S VOICE!

HE'S PLAYIN' WITH SPOT OUT FRONT!

"WE RAN OUT AND SAW QUINN CRAWFORD, A SALOON TOUGH WHO LIVED NEXT DOOR, BOOTING STAN'S PUP!"

YOU WEAVE SPOT AWONE!

LEGGO, BRAT!

"QUINN TOOK HIS SHOT AT ME AS I RUSHED IN, BUT I WAS AFRAID FOR STAN--OR I WOULD HAVE BORED HIM THEN AND THERE!"

BAM!

"I SMASHED QUINN'S HOGLEG FROM HIS HAND, THEN GUN-WHIPPED HIM LIKE A MADMAN!"

PUT YOUR DIRTY PAWS ON *MY* KID, WILL YOU? I'LL *FIX* YOU!

SMASH!

"QUINN FELL, BLEEDING AND UNCONSCIOUS TO THE DIRT, AND FRANK CAME AND DRAGGED ME AWAY!"

THAT'S *ENOUGH*, CLYDE, STAN'S WATCHING! C'MON INTO THE HOUSE--I'LL FIX THAT ARM!

"INSIDE THE HOUSE, FRANK GOT STAN STARTED FOR BED, THEN DOCTORED THE FLESH WOUND IN MY FOREARM!"

THERE, THAT OUGHT TO DO IT! STAN SHOULD BE ASLEEP BY NOW, AN' *YOU* OUGHT TO HIT THE HAY *TOO*, CLYDE!

COME MORNIN', I'M GONNA *DRIVE QUINN OUTTA TOWN* OR *KILL* HIM, THE *POLECAT!*

"I WENT TO MY ROOM, AN INSIDE ROOM WITH NO WINDOW, OPENING OFF THE FRONT ROOM, AND FELL ASLEEP, THINKING OF MY DEAR WIFE, SYLVIA, WHOM FRANK HAD LOVED AND WOOED BUT LOST TO ME!"

"SOMEONE SHOOK ME AWAKE! I LOOKED UP AND SAW THE SHERIFF! I KNEW I HADN'T BEEN ASLEEP VERY LONG..."

C'MON CLYDE, *QUIT FAKIN'!* I'M *ARRESTIN' YOU* FOR THE *MURDER* OF *QUINN CRAWFORD!*

WH-WHAT? YOU'RE *CRAZY!* I'VE BEEN HERE ALL NIGHT! *ASK FRANK!*

YOU CAN'T PROVE *ANYTHING* BY *FRANK!* HE WENT OUT FOR A WALK! YOU HAD A BAD FIGHT WITH QUINN, LATER QUINN WAS SHOT AN' WHEN I GOT THERE, I FOUND QUINN *DEAD* AN' *YOUR GUN* ON THE FLOOR! *YOU HAVEN'T GOT A PRAYER*, CLYDE!

"AT THE TRIAL, EVIDENCE PILED UP! THE BAD BLOOD BETWEEN QUINN AN' ME HELPED CONVICT ME, AND FRANK'S EVIDENCE HELPED THE PROSECUTION!"

CAN YOU SWEAR YOUR BROTHER NEVER LEFT THE HOUSE ON THE EVENING OF THE MURDER?

ER-*NO*,-*NO*, SIR, I *CAN'T!*

"I WAS FOUND GUILTY AND SENTENCED TO 10 YEARS! QUINN'S BAD REPUTATION SAVED ME FROM THE ROPE! BUT WHY HAD FRANK TURNED AGAINST ME? SUDDENLY, I KNEW!"

"FRANK SENT LETTERS AN' TRIED TO SEE ME IN JAIL! THE LETTERS I TORE UP, AND I REFUSED TO SPEAK TO HIM!"

CLYDE, I'M SORRY I,— OWWW!

YOU *COYOTE!* ALL THESE YEARS YOU'VE HATED ME 'CAUSE *SYLVIA MARRIED ME INSTEAD OF YOU!* I'LL COME BACK, FRANK! *BACK* TO *GET YOU!*

YOUR *BROTHER'S* HERE TO SEE YOU, CLYDE!

I *HAVE NO BROTHER!* TELL HIM I'M *NOT IN!*

EVEN *TEN YEARS* FINALLY PASSES, AN' NOW *I'M BACK*-- BACK TO FACE MY *ROTTEN BROTHER* AN' *BURN HIM DOWN!*

SAY! *I* KNOW FRANK JENNISON! HE'S...

WITH THE SPEED OF A STRIKING COUGAR, KID COLT CLOSES THE BARTENDER'S MOUTH!

YOU TALK TOO MUCH, FRIEND!

DON'T MOVE OR I'LL BLOW YOUR BACKBONE OUT! *NOW WHAT WERE YOU SAYIN', APRON?*

FRANK JENNISON OWNS THE C.J. RANCH--ABOUT AN *HOUR'S RIDE NORTH* OF HERE!

FATE CHUCKLES AS SHE EYES HER HOLE CARD--THE ACE OF SPADES-- THE CARD OF DEATH!

IT *WOULDN'T BE HEALTHY* TO *MOVE*, STRANGER, TILL I'M *LONG GONE!* I'M BORROWIN' THE CAYUSE TIED OUTSIDE! *YOU*, STRANGER, SEEM TO BE A *PARD* OF *FRANK'S*, SO I'LL LEAVE HIM FOR *YOU* TO *BURY* WHEN I'M *THROUGH!* *ADIOS!*

AS THE RATTLE OF HOOFS MERGE WITH THE DISTANCE, KID COLT SWINGS INTO ACTION...

MEBBE *THIS'LL* TEACH YOU TO KEEP YOUR LIP BUTTONED!

SMACK!

THE BLUE ROAN STALLION STRETCHES OUT--RACING NORTH THROUGH A ROUGH OWL-HOOT TRAIL KNOWN TO KID COLT-OUTLAW!

THE KID RUSHES TO THE STABLE, SADDLES UP AND LEAVES AN ASTONISHED HOSTLER BEHIND IN A CLOUD OF DUST...

BLACKSMITH STABLE

LET'S GO, STEEL!

I DON'T *BELIEVE* FRANK RAILROADED HIS BROTHER! *SOMETHING'S WRONG SOMEWHERE*, AN' I'VE *GOT TO STOP CLYDE* BEFORE IT'S *TOO LATE* TO *FIND OUT THE TRUTH!*

CLOSE TO THE C.J. RANCH, KID COLT CUTS DOWN TO INTERCEPT CLYDE JENNISON!

THE KID HITS THE TRAIL IN FRONT OF CLYDE'S FLYING MOUNT. CLYDE CURSES AS HIS HAND STREAKS DOWN IN THE SNAKE-LIKE GUNMAN'S DRAW!

YOU! YOU ASKED FOR IT!

DON'T DRAW ON ME, MISTER!

WHAT EYE CAN FOLLOW KID COLT'S FLASHING DRAW? WHAT HAND CAN MATCH HIS LIGHTNING SPEED?

I *WARNED* YOU, JENNISON!

ARRR-R-GGHH!

BANG!

LOADING CLYDE ON HIS HORSE, THE KID LEADS THE WOUNDED MAN TO HIS BROTHER FRANK'S RANCH!

FRANK! COME HERE!

KID! WHAT HAPPENED?

IT'S *YOUR BROTHER*, CLYDE! HE CAME *GUNNIN'* FOR YOU! I STOPPED HIM!

CLYDE! WHY DIDN'T HE READ MY LETTERS OR LET ME SEE HIM? I TRIED TO MAKE HIM UNDERSTAND! I'M GLAD STAN IS OUT RIDING!

THE MEN LAY CLYDE ON THE BED! FATE PLAYS ANOTHER CARD, AS CLYDE REGAINS CONCIOUSNESS...

CLYDE, YOU'VE *COME TO!*

YES... COME... TO... KILL... YOU!

LIKE THE OUTLAW HE IS, KID COLT REACTS AS QUICKLY AS HE THINKS, IN THE PRESENCE OF DANGER!

TAKE IT, FRANK, YOU *DOG!*

NO YOU DON'T!

BANG!

ALL RIGHT, YOU COYOTE, YOU WIN AGAIN! BUT *WE'LL BE ALONE SOMETIME* AN' *I'LL GET YOU THEN!* I'VE *WAITED TEN YEARS FOR THIS* AN' *NOTHIN'S* GONNA *STOP ME!* WHAT DID YOU DO WITH MY BOY, STAN?

YOUR SON IS *SAFE* AN' *FINE*, CLYDE! HERE, TAKE THE GUN, BUT LISTEN TO MY STORY FIRST BEFORE YOU SHOOT! *THEN* KILL ME IF YOU *THINK* YOU *SHOULD!*

I'LL GIVE YOU *FIVE MINUTES!* GO ON, TALK, BUT I WARN YOU-- NOTHIN' YOU CAN SAY WILL MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE! I *CAME BACK TO KILL YOU!*

LET'S GO BACK TO THE NIGHT OF THE MURDER! I LEFT YOU IN BED AN' WENT TO LOOK IN ON STAN...

"STAN WASN'T IN HIS ROOM! I WHIRLED AROUND AND SOMETHING HIT ME LIKE A BLOW! THE GUN YOU HAD LEFT ON THE TABLE--YOUR GUN-- WAS GONE!"

LITTLE *STAN, THE GUN-- BOTH GONE!*

"I RUSHED OUTSIDE! TINY TRACKS IN THE DUST-- STAN'S TRACKS, LED NEXT DOOR TO QUINN CRAWFORD'S BROKEN DOWN CABIN!"

"THE DOOR TO QUINN'S CABIN JOLTED SHUT AS I MOVED TOWARD IT, AND I HEARD QUINN'S DRUNKEN VOICE ASKING..."

WHAT DO *YOU* WANT, YOU *LITTLE PUNK?*

"I TRIED THE DOOR! THE JAR, AS IT SLAMMED, MUST HAVE THROWN THE BAR DOWN--IT WAS LOCKED! I CALLED..."

STAN! STAN! ARE YOU IN THERE?

"I RUSHED TO THE WINDOW AND PEERED IN! QUINN STOOD SWAYING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FLOOR--FACING HIM WAS STAN, AND IN HIS LITTLE HAND, HE CLUTCHED YOUR GUN!"

IF YOU HURT MY DOGGY AGAIN, I'LL HIT YOU WITH MY DADDY'S GUN LIKE HE DID, SEE?

"I SMASHED AT THE WINDOW, AS QUINN LURCHED FORWARD TOWARD THE CHILD!"

WHY, YOU LITTLE PUNK, I'LL...

CRASH!

"THE GLASS SMASHED TO GLITTERING FRAGMENTS UNDER MY POUNDING FISTS! I CLIMBED IN THE WINDOW AND SHOUTED..."

NO, QUINN, STOP IT!

YOU CAN TELL YOUR POP HE'LL GET THE SAME!

"THEN IT HAPPENED! QUINN SLAPPED LITTLE STAN, HARD! THE CHILD WAS FLUNG BACKWARD BY THE BLOW! BACKWARD, STRIKING THE WALL WITH A THUD, AND THE GUN IN HIS HAND WENT OFF!"

ARRGGHH!

BANG!

"I GRABBED STAN, MY MIND REELING WITH THE HORROR OF THE EVENT! I CLIMBED THROUGH THE WINDOW! MY ONLY THOUGHT WAS TO GET STAN AWAY!"

I FORGOT THE GUN! THE NEXT MORNING I TOLD STAN HE'D HAD A ***BAD DREAM!*** MY LIPS WERE SEALED, CLYDE! THE EFFECT ON THE BOY, THE ***SON*** OF A ***FAMOUS GUNMAN***, MIGHT HAVE ***SCARRED*** HIS ***SOUL*** FOR ***LIFE!***

DAD! I HEARD IT ALL! ***OH, DAD!***

STAN! MY SON!

I UNDERSTAND, FRANK! ***THANK YOU!*** THIS IS THE WAY SYLVIA WOULD HAVE WANTED IT!

THE RANCH IS IN BOTH OUR NAMES, CLYDE! ***WE THREE*** HAVE A ***GOOD LIFE*** AHEAD OF US!

OH, ***KID!*** THE ***SHERIFF*** IS RIDING THIS WAY! I RODE BACK TO TELL YOU!

THIS IS NO PLACE FOR ***KID COLT!***

KID COLT? NO WONDER HE BEAT ME TO THE DRAW!

ADIOS, ***FRIENDS!*** I'LL COME BY THIS WAY AGAIN, SOMETIME!

GOOD-BYE, AND ***THANKS***, KID COLT!

SO A PAIR OF SIXES IN KID COLT'S HANDS BEAT THE DEATH CARD, THE ACE OF SPADES! FATE CHUCKLES AND SHUFFLES THE CARDS FOR A NEW DEAL, AS KID COLT RIDES INTO THE SUNSET LEAVING BEHIND HIM A FULL HOUSE OF HEARTS!

THE END

MAN TRAP

THE killer sat in a chair tilted against the wall, wiping the ugly barrel of the rifle with an oily rag. Without turning his head, his intense, dark eyes seemed to follow Smokey Joe everywhere about the room. All morning he had sat there, never moving, never talking, almost as though he, and not the old Indian, owned the cabin.

Smokey knew that the little man had planned to kill him from the moment he stepped into the shack, but his face had never lost the passive acceptance of death that was the nature of the Indian. Smokey wasn't afraid of dying, for he had lived a long, useful life, trapping and fishing here in the mountains and enjoying all the years that were almost entirely filled with cold, ice and snow.

It made him angry to think that this little man, wanted in the city so many miles away for other killings, could be eating his food and sleeping in his bed while dreaming evil thoughts of future murders. But Smokey smiled while he cooked the dinner, for he knew he still had three days to live. The storm outside would last for just three days more. Smokey knew the signs, and he wouldn't be killed until then.

The man said, "What you got to eat?"

"Fish. Always fish now while it snow. Maybe when it stop I go get some rabbit."

The Indian went to the end of the room and opened the door to the lean-to. He pulled a box of frozen fish into the room and lay them behind the stove to throw out. From a pile beside the door he selected well dried pieces of split oak and fed them to the fire, making the chimney pipe turn a cherry red.

Yes, there were many things to be done in three days.

Supper was eaten in silence, but many words were in the eyes of the killer. Smokey read the signs carefully and knew the man had finished his plot. It was all decided now—just how he would die.

Mac, the ranger, had told him about this man. Four weeks ago he had disappeared into the hills, and even though a hundred men had hunted for him, never was a single footprint found. He was very smart for a city man. Smokey knew where he was bound—up across the border into Canada where he'd stay until the search quieted down.

The killer's eyes met his, and the man grinned a little, forcing his smile. He grinned because he thought Smokey took him to be just another hunter lost in the mountains, sweating out a storm in an Indian shack. What else could the old guy think? Wasn't he stuck back here three hundred miles from the nearest town? Whom did he ever see—maybe another Indian? And what could they know? Nothing—not a thing at all.

But Blackie Brady, the killer, wasn't taking any chances. So far he had made his way across two mountain ranges without being spotted, and even if this Indian didn't know him from Adam, when he left this shack, he wasn't going to leave anyone behind to identify him if some prowling cop showed up.

It was going to be easy, too. He'd fake being sick when this storm stopped and send the Indian across the river to pick up his pack containing the "medicine," where he'd cached it in a tree. As the Indian was crossing the river, he'd pick him off with his rifle, and in a week or so when the ice went out, the turbulent current of the river would carry the evidence a thousand miles away. It would save him the trouble of carrying a dead

STAMP NEWS

By KENT B. STILES

Notwithstanding the deluge of special stamps earlier announced at Washington for release during 1948 the Post Office Department has added five. The revised schedule commits the Department to at least fifteen such adhesives from January through December—and if you are looking for a reason for this generous output you can reflect that this is an election year! The more persons who are pleased before November arrives, the more votes the Democratic candidates should, theoretically, receive. Or so some politicians seem to think!

Congress enacted a bill calling for a stamp to commemorate the Swedish Pioneer Centennial being observed in the American Mid-West this Summer. President Truman promptly vetoed it. Shortly thereafter he changed his mind and directed the stamp be printed—and it appeared, a 5c in dark blue and light blue, on June 4. The design shows a Swedish pioneer moving Westward with a covered wagon a century ago. Six stars at left and six stars at right represent twelve States in which the Swedish immigrants settled.

The second additional stamp announced is one to honor Clara Barton (1821-1912), who was the first president of the American Red Cross.

The third promised item will mark the centennial of the creating of Oregon territory, from which were carved the States of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and parts of Montana and Wyoming.

Recalling a century of "peace and cooperation" between the United States and Canada will be a "special" to appear probably in August. The two countries have been at peace longer than a century, so what the stamp will specifically recall is the building of the first suspension bridge across the Niagara gorge between Niagara Falls, N. Y., and Niagara Falls, Ontario, in 1848.

A Hungarian air series carries portraits of persons associated with transportation. Most of the men honored are philatelic familiars, but three are newcomers to our hobby's gallery:

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50 HUNGARY All Different To Approval Buyers 5c GOLDEN STAMP CO. Box 34-M Rugby Station, Brooklyn 3, New York

25 DIFFERENT INDIA To Approval Buyers 3¢ Premiums with Purchases BRANDWEIN STAMP CO., Box 922 Bayonne, N. J.

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Indian half a mile to the river. Smokey would walk to his death.

The Indian's voice startled him. "Door shake bad in wind. Me fix soon before fall in." Blackie looked and saw the heavy planking rattle in the gusts, letting the sleet come in under the sill.

Smokey got up and pounded it in place with a piece of stove wood, grunting that it would hold until morning. Without another word he spread his blanket out on the floor and lay down. Almost immediately he was asleep, but, it wasn't that easy for Blackie. His thoughts and the noises from outside kept him awake until midnight, and even when his eyes did close, his hand rested on the butt of his gun.

Dawn came bleak and cheerless with the wind whistling stronger than ever. A fine layer of sleet had sifted in under the door. Blackie wrinkled his nose at the strong odor of fish, then pointed to the box and barked, "Do you have to keep them by the fire? They're smelling the joint up!"

"Must do," Smokey nodded. "Must keep warm so get oil for lamps soon. You see." They ate hungrily; then Blackie resumed his position in the chair while Smokey found a hammer and began working on the door. While he worked, he smiled, for the sounds that penetrated the storm, of the mountains and its creatures, were good sounds that he had loved all his life.

Blackie watched him carefully as he braced the door with a chair to keep it from falling in while he removed the hinges. The screw holes had rotted out so Smokey carved some pegs to fill them in, then began replacing the hinges. He grunted as he ran into some trouble getting them back on, but after an hour's effort the door stood firm and unyielding.

The sun came out the third day. Sunlight streamed through the tiny window in the wall. Blackie awoke gagging at the smell of the fish going bad by the fire. The foul odor made it easy for him to play sick. He called Smokey over and told him that there was a fire in his stomach, that the only medicine that would cure it was in his pack, wedged in the limbs of an oak tree across the river.

Smokey knew then that his time had come. He placed a bucket of water where the man could reach it and pulled on his coat to go for the pack —and to fall into the trap. His hand was steady as he reached for the knob and pulled the door open. After he'd stepped out, Blackie slipped out of bed and picked up his rifle from the corner, loading it with shells from his pocket. He looked out the window and saw the Indian on the path. He had to stay inside to do the job, firing through the glass. To go outside might mean being spotted, and Indians could move fast. He sat down and tried to hold his breath against the smell of the fish.

At first he thought the noise he heard was the Indian coming back, but it wasn't . .

From the edge of the icebound river where he was supposed to die, Smokey Joe heard the scream—then another and a shot. The scream rose sharply—and was cut off. Smokey didn't bother going back to the cabin. There were rabbit tracks heading toward the trees, and he was hungry.

MacDermott, the ranger, came by a week later. He met Smokey in a lean-to by the river and asked him if he had seen signs of a white man. Smokey told him then. "He die in cabin," he said.

The ranger's eyes widened in surprise, and he made Smokey take him to the shack. Blackie was dead all right, and so was a bear! They had killed each other. Mac was wise in the ways of the Indians so he asked Smokey what happened.

Smokey shrugged disdainfully. "Me make fish smell bad, then fix door to open in, not out. Bear—him like bad fish, him come in morning to find meal. Easy to get in shack, but when door not open out, bad man and bear can't leave. Then kill each other. No good to have door open in on shack."

Mac shook his head wonderingly at the Indian's wisdom. "You'll get a reward for this," he said.

Smokey grinned. "Better to have much bear meat to eat," he told the ranger.

THE END

SL—3373

THE TWO-GUN KID

THE ROPE TIGHTENS, THE WHIP SWINGS HIGH AND THE *TWO-GUN KID* IS FACE TO FACE WITH DEATH! WILL THIS BE THE END OF THE KID, OR WILL THE GRIM REAPER GIVE HIM A REPRIEVE? YOU'LL FIND THE ANSWER WRITTEN IN GUNSMOKE, WHEN...

"BURNING BULLETS BLAST A BORDER TOWN!"

3031

OUTSIDE THE LITTLE TOWN OF EL TORO NEAR THE MEXICAN BORDER, THE TWO-GUN KID PREPARES CAMP!

♪ I GOT TWO GUNS THAT BARK AND ROAR, THEY'RE SHOOTING DAY AND NIGHT! I GOT TWO GUNS AND WISH I HAD FOUR, BECAUSE I LIKE TO FIGHT! ♪

SUDDENLY, FROM BEYOND THE FURTHER RIDGE, GUNFIRE BLASTS ITS BLOODY CALL! WITH A PANTHERISH BOUND THE TWO-GUN KID HITS THE SADDLE!

BANG! BANG!

LET'S GO, CYCLONE! SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE'S IN TROUBLE!

LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S JUST GOT A TICKET TO BOOT HILL!

SHOT DEAD CENTER--GUN STILL IN THE HOLSTER--THE POOR JASPER DIDN'T HAVE A *CHANCE!* HE'S *AMERICAN* BUT DRESSED IN *MEX CLOTH-ING!*

SUDDENLY...

THAT'S JUST A *WARNING*, MISTER! YOU'RE *SURROUNDED*-- DROP THOSE GUNS OR *WE'LL DROP YOU!*

CRACK!

FACING HIDDEN ODDS, THE KID'S ONLY CHANCE OF SURVIVAL IS TO OBEY THE THREATENING COMMAND!

OKAY! YOU HAVE A *VERY CONVINCING* ARGUMENT!

THAT'S HIM, SHERIFF-- THAT'S THE MAN!

WE'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM, MR. WELLES!

NO, SHERIFF, *WE'LL* TAKE CARE OF HIM! GET A *ROPE*, BOYS! WE'LL MAKE HIM AN EXAMPLE AS A WARNING TO *OTHER OUTLAWS!*

NOW, WELLES, THIS IS NO WAY TO ACT! THIS MAN IS MY LAWFUL PRISONER AND DESERVES A TRIAL!

WE'LL GIVE HIM A TRIAL --- *HE'S GUILTY!*

HA, HA! *THAT'S* THE KIND O' TRIAL TO GIVE OUT-LAWS!

THROW THE ROPE OVER THAT TREE LIMB, SAM!

I *WARN* YOU MEN THAT IF YOU GO THROUGH WITH THIS *LYNCHIN'* YOU'RE LIABLE TO *ACTION BY THE LAW,!*

BEFORE I SWING, I DON'T THINK IT WOULD BE TOO MUCH TO ASK-- *WHAT* THIS IS *ALL ABOUT?*

YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT, YOU SNAKE! ROBBIN' MY BANK OF THE MONEY THE POOR MEXICANS SLAVED AND SWEATED FOR, THEN KILLIN' YORE PARTNER SO'S YOU'D HAVE *ALL* THE LOOT!

I SAW YORE FACE WHEN YORE MASK SLIPPED DURIN' THE HOLDUP! *STRING HIM UP,* MEN!

YOU LIE! I'VE NEVER BEEN IN EL TORO IN MY LIFE!

THE ROPE IS PULLED TAUT AND THE TWO-GUN KID TENSES, READY TO ATTEMPT A LAST DESPERATE MANEUVER!

STOP! THEES EES *NOT* THE BANDIT!

I, MANUEL JUAN ERNESTO JUAREZ WAS THERE IN BANK WHEN IT HAP-PEN! *BOTH* THEES MEN WERE *GRINGOS* DRESSED FOR TO BE LIKE *MEXICANS!* THEES MAN IS *NOT* ONE OF THEM--- THEES I SWEAR!

RELEASE THAT MAN!

THE ROPE IS LOOSENED AND THE KID DISMOUNTS...

A CLOSE SHAVE, SON!

TOO CLOSE! HOW COME YOU WERE SO ANXIOUS TO SWING ME, MR. BANKER WELLES?

A MISTAKE, MY BOY! YOU HAVE MY APOL-OGIES!

I DON'T LIKE THAT KIND OF MISTAKE, MISTER---SOMETIMES THEY PROVE *FATAL!*

MY ADVICE TO *YOU,* YOUNG FELLER, IS TO RIDE ON AN' FORGET IT!

...AND FACES HIS ACCUSER, ANGER BLAZING IN HIS EYES!

I DON'T LIKE TO BE TOLD WHAT TO DO, AMIGO! RECKON I'LL STICK AROUND YOUR LITTLE TOWN FOR A SPELL!

IN TOWN, THE KID TAKES A ROOM AT THE ROJO CASA!

FIRST ROOM ON THEES SIDE, AT HEAD OF STAIRS, SENOR!

GRACIAS, AMIGO!

RECKON I COULD USE A WASH AND A MEAL BEFORE I DELVE INTO THIS BANKER-BANDIT MYSTERY!

THE KID INSTINCTIVELY WHIRLS AND DRAWS AS HE SEES A MOVEMENT, REFLECTED IN THE MIRROR, FROM THE WINDOW BEHIND HIM!

CRASH!

BANG!

HIS SHOT BLASTS INTO THE BODY OF THE SNEAKING BUSHWHACKER! THE KID RUSHES TO THE WINDOW IN TIME TO SEE A SECOND MARAUDER VANISH AROUND THE CORNER!

SO, THERE WERE *TWO* OF THEM!

BANG!

HE CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR!

THE KID STUMBLES AS HE HITS THE GROUND!

THAT WAS A LUCKY STUMBLE!

BANG!

WITH LIGHTNING SPEED, THE TWO-GUN KID DRAWS!

ARRGGHH!

THE NEXT TIME, HOMBRE, PICK A BETTER BARREL!

BANG!

HOT LEAD RIPS THROUGH THE EMPTY BARREL, AND THROUGH THE HEART OF THE KILLER BEHIND IT!

WHAT'S THE SHOOTIN' FOR, MISTER?

NOT FOR *FUN*, SHERIFF! *THIS* ONE AN' *ANOTHER* MADE THEIR TRY AT ME! I SALI-VATED *BOTH* OF 'EM!

THEES MAN *BAD HOMBRE!* LAS' WEEK HEEM SHOOT MY SISTER'S BRO-THER-IN-LAW'S PADRE!

ALL THE TIME GRINGOS SHOOT, FIGHT, KEEL-- EES BAD!

BANK-ROB ALL THE TIME! MEXICANS SAVE NO MONEY!

WHY DO YOU ALL USE THE SAME BANK?

THEY *ALL* BANK AT *WELLES' MEX-ICAN-QUARTER BANK!* HE'S MARRIED TO A MEX GIRL AN' THEY ALL TRUST HIM!

MES AMIGOS, YOU WILL *NOT LOSE* THE MONEY YOU EN-TRUSTED TO MY BANK! I'VE JUST TELEGRAPHED TO THE MOJAVE CITY BANK TO SEND ME A SHIPMENT OF GOLD TO COVER YORE LOSSES!

YOU CAN PLANT THOSE EVIL SEEDS I SHOT ON BOOT HILL, SHERIFF! I'LL SEE YOU LATER!

RECKON I'LL GET CYCLONE AND RIDE OUT TO MEET THAT GOLD SHIP-MENT-- JUST TO BE SURE IT GETS HERE SAFELY!

AS THE TWO-GUN KID ENTERS THE GLOOM OF THE STABLE...

ARRGH!

WHAM!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER, BOUND AND HELPLESS, THE KID GAINS CONSCIOUSNESS.

OHH! SOMEBODY SURE HAS TAKEN A DISLIKE TO ME!

THEY MADE A MISTAKE LEAVING THAT *CANDLE*--- I'LL BURN THROUGH THESE *ROPES* WITH IT!

UGGH! IT'S BURNING MY WRISTS--- WHATS THAT? VOICES BEYOND THIS WALL!

FREE! AND JUST IN TIME! I COULD NEVER STAND MY OWN COOKING! WHERE'S THAT PIECE OF *PIPE* I SAW?

ONE OF THOSE VOICES SOUNDED *FAMILIAR!* I RECKON I'LL TAKE A LOOK-SEE!

...THE OTHER ROOM...

-AND IT'S TURNED OUT JUST RIGHT! THE SQUAWK THE MEXICANS PUT UP GAVE ME A GOOD *EXCUSE* TO ASK FOR THE GOLD SHIPMENT FROM MOJAVE!

I GOT TO *HAND* IT TO YOU, WELLES --USING A *BANK* FOR A *FRONT!*

WE'LL *GRAB* THE GOLD SHIPMENT-- TAKE THE *OTHER MONEY* FROM THE BANK HOLDUPS-- AND DO A FADE-OUT!

WHAT ABOUT *MARIA?*

SLOWLY, WITH THE STEALTH OF A HUNTING PUMA, THE KID EASES THE DOOR OPEN A CRACK AND PEERS INTO...

MARIA? I JUST MARRIED HER TO GAIN THE MEXICAN'S *CONFIDENCE* SO THEY'D *USE MY BANK!* WE'LL *KNOCK OFF* THAT NOSEY STRANGER BEFORE WE GO, TOO!

THE NOSEY STRANGER CAN'T *WAIT*, WELLES! *DON'T MOVE OR I'LL BORE YOU!*

WHAT TH—!

THE KID USES THE PIPE TO GOOD ADVANTAGE!

WHERE DID YOU GET A GUN?

FROM *YOU, JUST NOW!*

WELLES JUMPS ASIDE AND DEADLY LEAD LACES THE ROOM, SCREECHING ITS BLOOD-CALL!

ZING!

BAM!

THE CRAVEN SOULS OF THE WOULD-BE BADMEN SHRIVEL UNDER THE KID'S BLAZING GUNFIRE...

DON'T SHOOT --*WE GIVE UP!*

WE'VE HAD ENOUGH!

LATER..

A GOOD JOB, SON! THESE PEOPLE OWE YOU A LOT!

YOU BE BANKER NOW, AMIGO! *WE TRUST YOU!*

COUNTY JAIL

GRACIAS, AMIGOS-- BUT *I'M* NO BANKER! HAVE ONE OF *YOUR OWN* PEOPLE TAKE OVER THE BANK!

HE RIDE AND SHOOT LIKE *DEVIL* -- A *MALO* HOMBRE!

♪ ♪ ♪ I GOT TWO GUNS THAT BARK AND ROAR, THEY'RE SHOOTING DAY AND NIGHT! ♪ I GOT TWO GUNS AND WISH I HAD FOUR, BECAUSE I LIKE TO ♪ FIGHT! ♪

HE GOT HEART LIKE *SAINT*-- A *BUENO* HOMBRE!

THE END

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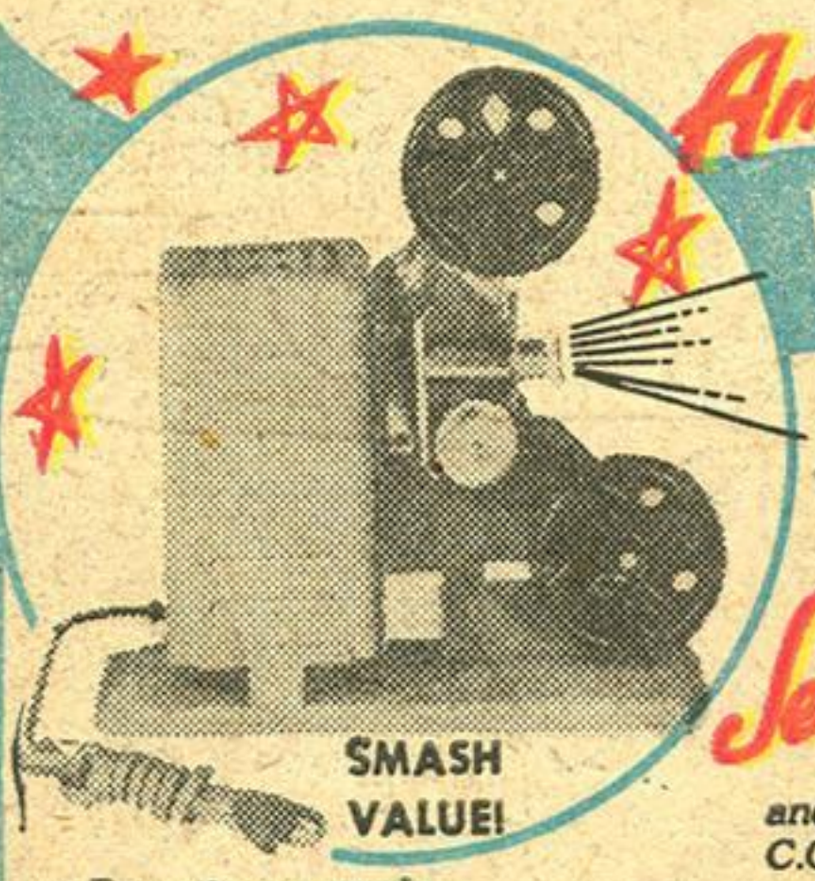

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